



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/776,711	02/05/2001	Richard D. Cramer	3017-51	5657

7590 03/13/2003

LAURENCE A. WEINBERGER
ATTORNEY AT LAW
882 S. MATLACK STREET, SUITE 103
P.O. BOX 1663
WEST CHESTER, PA 19380-0053

[REDACTED] EXAMINER

ZEMAN, MARY K

[REDACTED] ART UNIT

[REDACTED] PAPER NUMBER

1631

DATE MAILED: 03/13/2003

7

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/776,711	CRAMER ET AL.
	Examiner Mary K Zeman	Art Unit 1631

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 November 2001.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-3 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-3 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 2 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 08 November 2001 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ . 6) Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-3 are pending in this application.

Priority

Priority to a prior US Application is acknowledged.

Information Disclosure Statement

The listing of references in the specification is not a proper information disclosure statement. 37 CFR 1.98(b) requires a list of all patents, publications, or other information submitted for consideration by the Office, and MPEP § 609 A(1) states, "the list may not be incorporated into the specification but must be submitted in a separate paper." Therefore, unless the references have been cited by the examiner on form PTO-892, they have not been considered.

Drawings

The corrected or substitute drawings were received on 11/08/01. These drawings are acceptable to the examiner. If any changes were made to the drawings in the parent application that are not reflected in the current set of drawings, those changes should be submitted as soon as possible.

Specification

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: The brief description of the drawings at pages 20-21 fails to address each panel of each figure individually as required.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

Claim 2 objected to because of the following informalities: Claim 2, line 2 "... in the Tanimoto..." should read "... is the Tanimoto...". Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. The claims are drawn to methods, which do not result in the production of a concrete tangible and useful result. The “method of merging” merely combines groups of data about chemical structures, with no specific output of a result that meets the concrete, tangible and useful criteria.

MPEP 2106: "For such subject matter to be statutory, the claimed process must be limited to a practical application of the abstract idea or mathematical algorithm in the technological arts. See Alappat, 33 F.3d at 1543, 31 USPQ2d at 1556-57 (quoting Diamond v. Diehr, 450 U.S. at 192, 209 USPQ at 10). See also Alappat 33 F.3d at 1569, 31 USPQ2d at 1578-79 (Newman, J., concurring) (“unpatentability of the principle does not defeat patentability of its practical applications”) (citing O ’Reilly v. Morse, 56 U.S. (15 How.) at 114-19). A claim is limited to a practical application when the method, as claimed, produces a concrete, tangible and useful result; i.e., the method recites a step or act of producing something that is concrete, tangible and useful. See AT & T, 172 F.3d at 1358, 50 USPQ2d at 1452. Likewise, a machine claim is statutory when the machine, as claimed, produces a concrete, tangible and useful result (as in State Street, 149 F.3d at 1373, 47 USPQ2d at 1601) and/or when a specific machine is being claimed (as in Alappat, 33 F.3d at 1544, 31 USPQ2d at 1557 (in banc)."

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Chapman (USP 5,703,792).

The claims are drawn to merging assemblies of molecules based upon steps of using validated molecular structural descriptors, calculating molecular structural distances, and determining whether the distances fit the descriptor, and including molecules that fall outside the descriptor.

Chapman (USP 5,703,792) uses the calculated molecular structural distances in tandem with a "validated molecular structural descriptor" (The Tanimoto coefficient as required by claim 2) to generate new molecules or categories of molecules. The process is iterative, and results in the generations of merged compounds/ assemblies. Therefore, this disclosure meets the limitations of the claims.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Cramer et al. USP 6,240,374 having claims drawn to methods of generating virtual libraries.

Cramer et al. USP 6,185,506 having claims to methods of validating molecular descriptors, methods of determining neighborhood distance, methods of characterizing three dimensional structures, methods of selecting all possible product molecules from a combinatorial synthesis, and systems for the above.

Cramer, III et al. USP 5,307,287 having claims to molecules, identified by particular computer assisted method steps, methods of generating and visualizing a 3-D QSAR relationship in a series of molecules, methods for deriving a 3-D QSAR relationship in a series of molecules, computer based methods of design, and systems for the above.

Cramer, III et al. (USP 5,025,388) having claims to methods of generating and visualizing 3-D QSAR relationships, methods for deriving those relationships, methods comprising the "Field Fit" method, methods of aligning or docking shape complementary molecules, methods of determining likely activity through CoMFA, etc..

No claim is allowed.

Art Unit: 1631

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mary K Zeman whose telephone number is (703) 305-7133.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Woodward, can be reached at (703) 308-4028.

Official fax numbers for this Art Unit are: (703) 308-4242, (703) 872-9306. An *unofficial* fax number, direct to the Examiner is (703) 746 5279. Please call prior to use of this number.

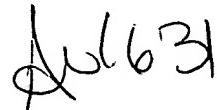
Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the TC1600 Receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0196.

mkz

3/7/03



MARY K. ZEMAN
PRIMARY EXAMINER


J.W.Z.